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The Emigrant and Sportsman in Canada

John J. Rowan

THE EMIGRANT AND SPORTSMAN IN CANADA.

SOME EXPERIENCES OF AN OLD COUNTRY SETTLER.

WITH

SKETCHES OF CANADIAN LIFE, SPORTING ADVENTURES, AND OBSERVATIONS ON THE FORESTS AND FAUNA.

BY

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WITH MAP.

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colonial life? This class cannot possibly be all absorbed into the army and navy and learned professions. What is to become of all the drones, unless a bloody war breaks out? And assuredly the life of a squatter or a back settler is far before that of a loafer. Wages are very much higher in most colonies than they are at home, mechanics', artificers', and tradesmen's wages especially, and the demand for such men is nearly always greater than the supply; so that the emigrant labourer or tradesman runs no risk. It is otherwise, however, with the penniless gentleman, who is at first unable to work with his hands, and has to endure much hardship during an irksome apprenticeship. In preparing young men for colonial life, in addition to their other education, they should each be taught thoroughly at least one trade or handicraft, such as carpentering, saddlery, turning, &c.; they should be made to shear sheep with their own hands, feed stock, and acquire a practical knowledge of the hundred things which the squatter or backwoods farmer may any day have to turn his hand to.

I do not pretend to be competent myself to prescribe an exact course of education for would-be colonists; but I desire to direct attention to the necessity of some special training, in the hope that a properly qualified person may be induced to take up the idea and elaborate it. Of this I am sure, that a trade or handicraft should form part of the curriculum of every young man destined for colonial life, and I can speak strongly on this point, as I often felt the want of such myself. It would possess the double advantage of ensuring its possessor against want, and would teach him early—and this is a great point—how to work.

In the last century emigrants to the United States were sold as slaves on arrival at New York to defray the costs of their passages; that is to say, they were indented to purchasers for such a term of years as, at a stipulated rate of wages, should clear their passage expenses. A writer on emigration of that day said that the most unsaleable articles in the market were "military officers and scholars." It may be said with truth to-day that military officers and scholars are the articles for which there is least demand in the colonial labour market.

There are thousands of men in the old country who have not been brought up to work of any kind, and who consequently are unable to contribute towards their own support. Many men of this class naturally turn their eyes to the colonies, and it is hard to have to tell them that their prospects of success as chance emigrants are not much greater abroad than they are at home. But I think that any man with a practical experience of colonial life will bear me out in the assertion that emigrants of this stamp are almost invariably disappointed. They arrive in the colony of their choice very often with little or no capital, and no plans beyond vague ideas that land is cheap, that farming is a thing that any fellow can learn, and that "roughing it in the bush is a jolly sort of life, you know." I have no hesitation in saying that roughing it in the bush is a jolly sort of life to a man who takes off his coat and works, who makes up his mind to leave England and English ways behind him, and who tries to adapt himself to the ways of colonial life and colonial people. Many Englishmen fail in these particulars. They try to take England along with them to

On the Canadian side of the river, opposite Campbelton, is Bourdo Point, the scene of a combat between the French and English. Looking up-stream from here, the Restigouche presents the appearance of a lake walled in on all sides by mountains. Below, on two opposite points, may be seen the villages of Campbelton and the Mission; the former overtopped by the sugar-loaf, while in the distance the waters of the bay stretch away towards the Blue Mountains of Gaspé. Near here is the commencement of an old military road leading to Quebec, called the Kempt Road, after a British general of that name. It is merely a track, but until quite recently the mails were carried this way to Quebec, on horseback in summer, and by dog sled in winter.

Some time since a Californian miner, who happened to be passing through this "portage" road, found indications of gold; and having purchased the contiguous land, he brought his family with him, and built a house. He procured the assistance of an Indian, and for three years these two men dug perseveringly, but with no result. At last means of subsistence failed, and the Californian died in want, believing to the last that his house was built on gold. I had the curiosity to visit the scene of the poor fellow's labours, a 20 mile ride from Bourdo through the wilderness. It is a wild and dreary place; the house is in a valley on a little river, shut in by great hills, which were then covered from top to bottom with blueberries. Through the blueberry bushes giant boulders protrude, and charred rampikes bristle. What a place for a man to live and die in! But where will men not go for gold? I procured specimens of the quartz, which abounds in great quantities, and submitted them to a mineralogist, who, though unable to find any trace of gold, pronounced it to be gold-bearing quartz. The Kempt Road in the fall is worth a visit by the sportsman, as partridges are very plentiful, and bears are often met with feeding on the blueberries.

The Micmacs, a branch of the great Iroquois nation, are the aboriginal inhabitants of this country. When Jacques Cartier visited the Baie des Chaleurs in 1634, he was charmed with the friendly conduct, hospitality, and politeness of these people, who says one of the party, "in one of their boats came unto us, and brought us pieces of seals ready sodden, putting them on pieces of wood; then retiring themselves, they would make signs unto us, that they did give them to us." This tribe being an essentially canoe-going people have always lived near the sea-shore, their villages generally being built on the mouths of large rivers. The network of lakes and rivers which intersects the large tract of country drained by the Restigouche and its tributaries, is peculiarly favourable to their mode of life. As appears from the passage I have quoted, they were never a ferocious people, though undoubtedly valiant warriors. They were perhaps the most formidable of the tribes who contended with the fierce Mohawk. In 1639 there was a great war between the tribes, and a bloody battle was fought about that time at the mouth of the Restigouche. It does not need a strong effort of the imagination to picture one of these combats. The season is summer, the time midnight. The Micmacs are asleep in their village at the Flat Lands. A hundred Mohawk canoes, each one containing four warriors, are floating noiseless down the rapid Restigouche. No splash can be heard, no paddle touches the bark, and the gurgling of the stream is the only sound that breaks the stillness of the night. These canoes have

been "portaged" from the St. Lawrence into the St. John, from thence into the Restigouche; and now thirsting for blood and plunder the Mohawk nears his foe. He sees the camp fires, and the canoes are noiselessly beached in a secluded inlet. Four hundred warriors, with mocassined tread and ready tomahawk, creep stealthily towards the wigwams. Then the quiet night is startled by the shrieks and groans of the dying, and the dreaded war-cry of the Mohawk rings through the forest. But the surprise is not always so successful, and then the *dénoûment* of the tragedy is somewhat different. Perhaps a Micmac scout has discovered the invader, while yet he is far off, and paddling down the river for love of life and tribe has given the alarm. The sturdy Micmac does not quail; the women and children are packed off to the woods; sentries are posted to give timely notice of the approach of the enemy. The fires are kept burning, but the wigwams are deserted. The good spirit of the Micmac is invoked with hurried rites, knives are sharpened, tomahawks ground, and arrow-heads fitted. The foe lands and steals on the village. He sees the *ruse*, but too late; a shower of flint-headed arrows are poured into his ranks, and on all sides the Micmac war-whoop resounds. Many an invader falls, but the remnant cut their way to their fleet. Woe! The canoes are gone, and far off in the darkness is heard the mocking laughter of the Micmac squaws. So with back to the river which is to be his grave, and with face to the foe, the gallant Mohawk sells his scalp as dearly as he may.

Before their conversion by the Jesuits, the Micmacs had much the same beliefs and superstitions as the other tribes

of North America. Thus they believed in a good spirit and an evil spirit—beings of supernatural powers,—the former of whom made all that is good, such as life, fine weather, corn, moose, salmon, &c. The latter made everything bad, such as death, storms, disease, and hurtful animals (amongst which they probably included the Mohawks). They lived on fish, game, and berries, which latter were dried and eaten as bread. They clothed themselves with furs and the skins of the moose and the cariboo, which when dressed by the squaws were as pliable and soft as cloth. Before the coming of the white man these people probably led a happy and contented existence. They had food in abundance, and if the winters were cold, the supply of firewood was inexhaustible.

The largest village of the Micmacs is at Mission Point, an Indian reserve, where there are upwards of two hundred families. They have a chapel, a schoolhouse, and a store. Each man pays $2 per annum to the priest, and this money is, I think, fairly earned, for their priest looks after their interests, settles their disputes, and is of much service to them temporally as well as spiritually. Their dwellings vary from the bark wigwam up to the one-and-a-half story shingled house. Some of them are very neat and comfortable, and the crucifix suspended over each bedstead shows that they are good Roman Catholics. There is certainly something in that religion which causes it to be more acceptable to a semi-barbarous people, than the bald worship of many other Christian denominations. The Indians are very particular about keeping all fasts, feasts, and holidays, which they spend in fiddling, dancing, loafing, and drinking rum. St. Anne is their patron saint, and her day is the greatest

event of the year. The Mission is decorated with spruce boughs, particularly the chapel, which is really very tastefully ornamented. After service St. Anne's bones are carried about in a birch-bark box, followed by every man, woman, and child in the Mission in their gayest costumes. The procession is enlivened by a hurdy-gurdy, a couple of fiddles, and an incessant discharge of musketry, for every man and boy carries his firelock on his shoulder, and burns his half-pound of powder in honour of his patron saint. Afterwards they dance, and smoke, and chatter, and enjoy their festivities more thoroughly, perhaps, than we enjoy any of our conventional amusements.

These Indians are not decreasing in numbers, but the admixture of white blood is so great that there are few full-blooded Micmacs. Children with blue eyes and light curly hair are not an uncommon sight in their camps. They are, or were not long ago, divided into two parties, under the respective leadership of Sam Soap and Peter Basket. The latter personage, some twenty years ago, went to London as ambassador from his tribe to Queen Victoria, to obtain redress for Indian lands that had been appropriated by the whites. Being unsuccessful in his mission, and making some friends in England, who showed him the Lion, he remained in that country for fifteen years, living at his ease. But all this time he had a longing for the Restigouche, for the smoky wigwam, for the salmon spearing, for the hunting, and the freedom of a savage life. So uncontrollable these feelings grew, that getting a sum of money from his patrons he started off, and arrived safely at the well-remembered wigwam. The old squaw was engaged at her household duties when her husband entered.

She handed him his pipe from the chimney corner, and as he puffed in silence, she said to their daughter, "Nancy, here is the old man come back with a new hat." A day or two after Peter might have been seen in front of his camp making himself a canoe. This is the true history of Peter Basket. Now Sam Soap was the interpreter, and a sly fellow to boot; and on one occasion, when the priest told his congregation "that unless he was better paid not a soul would ever get out of purgatory," Sam interpreted into Micmac, adding, "that every one who did not give interpreter a dollar, would go to hell sure." Peter, after his travels, knew too much for Sam. So the latter made a bold move and spread a report that Antichrist had come into the Mission. There was division among the Micmacs, half arrayed themselves under Sam, the remainder followed Peter, and the strife was internecine. The question was, "Is Peter Basket, Peter Basket; or is he Antichrist in Peter's form?" I don't know that the matter is settled yet. Although not involving such large stakes as the famous Tichborne trial in England, as a case of identity it is equally interesting. Mrs. Basket sticks to it that he is he, which is to say the least of it strong *primâ facie* evidence for Peter.

The Indians are always glad to hire with a sportsman; they are ready, willing, hard-working fellows; know every inch of the country, and generally do their best to show their employers sport. On these occasions, so far from being taciturn, they are just the reverse, and sitting over the camp fire at night they spin many queer old yarns. The following is a specimen of one of their legends, which, however, loses much in my language. Here it is:

The Story of the Loon.

"It was wartime with the Mohawk. The leaves had fallen, the beaver had finished their lodges, and the geese were assembling together for their flight to the south, when a canoe was seen approaching. It was paddled by one man, a stranger, his name was Nic-ca-boc-ca-lic, and he came from the east, but no one knew more than that. He was a mighty hunter and a great warrior, and a scourge to the Mohawk. But at last Nic. (as we will call him for shortness) was taken prisoner by a war-party of twelve Mohawks, who were followed by a dog. So pleased were they with their prize, that it was determined to take him to the Mohawk country and dispose of him at their leisure. But Nic. made the winter come, and the Restigouche froze over, so that their canoes were useless. Then they tried to walk, but Nic. made the snow fall deep, and that too was impossible. Then they were in danger of starvation and tried to catch beaver, but all their efforts were in vain, as these animals had retired to winter-quarters. But Nic. said if they would follow him he would show them how to catch beaver. So, they consenting, he took them to a lake and cut twelve holes in the ice with a tomahawk, and at each one he posted a Mohawk with a spear, and arranged them in such a way that each man was hid from his fellows. Then Nic. commenced with the last man and said, "Jenem look down your hole, perhaps beaver come;" and when the Mohawk did as he was told, Nic. came behind him and shoved him under the ice. He took the same course with each of the twelve, till at last only the dog was left, and he, poor

quadruped, kept running from one hole to another, howling piteously. So Nic. changed him into a loon, and he flew to the south. Nic. himself disappeared, and was never seen again, but the loon returns every spring to the Bay of Chaleur, and swimming round and round the shores, never ceases to cry for his lost masters."

The Canadian Government, as a rule, treat the Indian tribes within the Dominion liberally and well, but I think they have been rather hard upon the poor Micmacs of the Restigouche. They have not prevented greedy settlers from robbing them of their land, and latterly they have prohibited them from spearing salmon. For hundreds, or perhaps thousands, of years, these Indians have lived upon the salmon in summer, and if it was thought advisable in the interests of the fisheries to prohibit spearing altogether, the Government should have given them some equivalent. What they did give them was one net which brings in about a dollar per annum to each family. When the spearing was put an end to, the Indians were told that large numbers of anglers would visit the Bay of Chaleur, and employ them at high wages, besides giving them the salmon they caught. This would be the case if the rivers were open, but under the present system of leasing them, not one Indian in a hundred is employed, and I am told that some lessees endeavour to recoup themselves for the rent by salting and carrying off the salmon. The laws are enforced against the Indian, but not against the white man; the former requires a torch which makes him conspicuous, the latter uses his net quietly but effectually in the dark.

The people one meets in Restigouche add to the enjoy-

ment of the place. Refreshing as dew to the thirsty herb, as sleep to the tired, as pale ale to the thirsty man, is it to find a spot in this world where men are not striving furiously after money, where nature is not destroyed by mills and stores, a place that neither changes for better nor for worse. What effect the Intercolonial will work, I do not know, but at present such a place is Restigouche—charming Restigouche, where you get better value for a little "chumming" and handshaking than for dollars. But the traveller must not be in a hurry at Restigouche, or he will be likely to lose his temper, perhaps his mind. Time is not money in this peaceful spot; he will do well to float along quietly with the tide, and enjoy life. The mail driver will stop for an hour on the road to have a friendly chat with the driver of your "express." Remonstrance is unavailing. The ferryman is perhaps lending a hand on an unmanageable raft of timber, for no Restigouche man will see another Restigouche man stuck if he can help it, and unless you can ferry yourself across the river you may camp on the bank till further orders. Expostulation is useless, and haste is worse than useless: you may just do in Restigouche as Restigouche does. It is different from the rest of the continent, and suits an idler to perfection.

In the rivers and lakes that flow into the Bay of Chaleur there are at least five different species of the *Salmonidæ*.

1. The American salmon (*Salmo salar*) is allowed by naturalists to be identical with the European fish, although its habits are slightly modified by different conditions of climate, &c. In the Bay of Chaleur salmon

commence to run into the rivers about the 1st of June. The first fish taken in the nets are medium sized, viz. about 12 or 14 lbs. These are merely skirmishers, and are not taken in numbers. Next comes—commencing from June 7 to June 15—the main army. In the Restigouche and Cascapediac these fish average over 20 lbs. For two or three days together I have known the average size taken in a net, to be as high as 25 lbs., and running up to 40 and even 50 lbs. As the season advances the fish get smaller, with an occasional monster. The grilse commence to run about July 20, and run all August. It is a remarkable thing that in rivers such as the Restigouche and Metapedia, where the adult salmon are particularly large, the grilse are very small, viz. averaging about 3 lbs., and I have taken them as low as 1 lb. Salmon spawn in Canada somewhat earlier than they do at home. In Ireland, where I have had ample opportunities of noticing their habits, I have seldom seen them on the rood much before Christmas. In Restigouche I have killed a gravid fish on the 1st of September, and in October most of them are on the rood. Nature teaches them that the seasons here are shorter. In Canadian rivers, if they put off rooding till December, the action of the ice on the shallow spawning beds would make rooding impossible. Many kelts—probably all the June run—return to the sea in November, or just before the ice makes; the remainder return in April, May, or on the break-up of the ice. Some fish only spawn every second year. I base this assertion upon the fact that I have killed female kelts in the Restigouche as late as the month of August; these fish had probably spawned late in the season of the preceding year,

When Winter lays his hand on the land, the feathered game, with one exception, fly from his icy touch to warmer shores. The bear, hid away in his den, fares sumptuously (it is said) on his paws. The only game left worthy the sportsman's notice are the cariboo and the moose. (The reindeer and elk of Europe are, if not identical, as like the cariboo and moose as any two beasts on one side of the Atlantic can be to any two at the other side.) Hunting these animals successfully is not such an easy matter as might be desired. The sportsman cannot breakfast comfortably at home and return to dinner to talk of this moose and that cariboo that have fallen to his unerring rifle. No! He has to seek for them far away in the depths of the howling, snow-covered wilderness; he has to make a regular business of it, to tear himself from the bosom of his family for a fortnight, to undergo a certain amount of hardship, devour a certain amount of nastiness, and after all, if fate be unkind, he is liable to return empty-handed and be chaffed by his friends. But, on the other hand, should his luck be in, his powder straight, and his hunt successful, the difficulties he has encountered have but added to his enjoyment.

In these excursions sportsmen usually go in pairs, and their first step is to secure the services of two good Indian hunters. The Indians of Canada belong to the Iroquois, or "six nations." The best hunters are the Micmacs and Milicetes (branches of the six nations); the former live on the sea-coast in Lower Canada, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island; the latter live inland on the St. John river. The Montaignais and Squappies of the north shore of the St. Lawrence are also good hunters.

The languages of all these tribes are different, although I have no doubt etymologists would have little difficulty in tracing their dialects back to the same parent tongue. In habits they are all much alike. They are not addicted to scalping, and have never been known (when sober) to utter a war cry. On the contrary, they are a quiet, civil, obliging, lazy lot of people, given to making baskets and smoking, and, I am sorry to say, drinking when they have the means. They have entirely renounced paint and feathers, and dress, the men in coats and continuations, the women in petticoats, like white people; with one grand exception, viz. the lady wears the beaver. It is indeed a fine sight to see a squaw coming to market with her baskets and a papoose on her back, a tall hat on her head, mocassins on her feet, and a silver brooch like a tin plate on her bosom. Their names are peculiar. I never knew an Indian called Smith, Jones, or Robinson. A dozen of our commonest male Christian names would include the names of almost every man in the tribe; whilst half-a-dozen female Christian names prefixed to these would take in all the women. This apparent simplicity of nomenclature is rather puzzling; thus, in a party of four Indians with their squaws, two of the men will perhaps answer to the names of Peter Joe, the other two to Joe Peter, whilst all the four ladies will be Nancy Joes and Nancy Peters.

Having secured the services of two good hunters at a dollar a day each, rifles, blankets, axes, snow shoes, and provisions are packed on a sled, the trabogens are tied on behind, and the hunters start for their ground. Each year this hunting ground moves farther away as the settlement

imitating the cry of the female might at first glance seem a treacherous practice, unworthy of the name of sport. But on the contrary I know of no sport more fascinating. The stillness of the autumnal evening, broken only by the occasional "call" of the hunter and the footsteps of the approaching animal, the cloudless sky, the painting of the forest, and the reflections on the water, lend their charms. Then the amount of skill required is very great. A first-class "caller" is as rare as a first-rate tenor. Nature has not been bountiful to me in the way of voice, but a few eager moose trusted themselves within range of my rifle, and one evening I towed into camp a magnificent bull, with antlers measuring nearly 5 feet from tip to tip.

Trapping, shooting, exploring, and so on, the time rapidly slipped away. On the 20th of November, when by good luck we had just got our last load from the bear-house, winter, which had already threatened, set in for good, and froze us up in our winter home. Now we turned our attention from water fur to the sable. We made a "sable line" of about 30 miles in length straight through the woods. In this we had 300 or 400 traps, each constructed on a tree stump some 4 feet from the ground, so as not to be buried in the snow. We had a wigwam at the extreme end of our sable line and another in the centre, half-way from our main camp. All winter long we were kept busy attending this line and procuring bait for the traps. Besides, we got an occasional otter and beaver in steel traps set under the ice. As winter advanced the snow got deeper and deeper and the cold more intense, but our camp was warm and sheltered, and firing abundant. No coal bills troubled us. Every now and

then, when weather suited, I used to go out on a cariboo hunt with Toma, and from time to time we shot six or eight of these deer, and hauled their carcases to camp on our trebogens.

On one of these hunts I met with a mischance, which might have been attended with serious consequences. Contrary to my custom I went out alone and unprovided with axe or provisions. I soon came on fresh tracks and became intensely absorbed in hunting them. After a long and tedious stalk I came up to the cariboo and shot one. I then for the first time remarked that the sun had become obscured. Hastily cutting the liver out of the dead cariboo, I endeavoured to take a line through the woods to the edge of the lake, which was at most 2 miles distant. After an hour's hard walking I came upon my own tracks, not 100 yards from where I had shot the deer. In fact, I was lost in the woods, and the day was all but done. It may be asked, "Why not have taken your own back-tracks?" Because a man who has unwittingly walked a circle as I had done becomes utterly stupefied and cannot distinguish out-tracks from in-tracks. This was an awkward position, 3 feet of snow, 40° or 50° of frost, and worst of all, no axe. I saw that I was doomed to spend the night in the open, and I set about preparing for it with a will. Fortunately I found some dead stumps and poles which I managed to pull down and collect before night-fall. Then I was no longer alarmed. I dug a hole in the snow some 6 feet square, using a snow shoe as a shovel. In this pit I lit my fire, and by its light broke fir boughs for my couch. It was not quite a case this of "happy low, lie down," for when I heard during that long night the

trees cracking with reports like rifle shots all around me; I shuddered to think what my fate would have been had fortune not directed me to the dead wood. Next morning the sun rose bright, and at ten I was breakfasting in camp. Andrew remarked jocularly, "Suppose two nights man no come home, sartin he dead." There are two things essential to safety which the solitary hunter should never be without, viz. a box of matches and a pocket compass. With these articles added to a little knowledge of woodcraft he runs little danger.

I do not know a more fascinating study than that of woodcraft. The forest is a perfect library. There is hardly a day or a night in which the student may not learn something new. Signs invisible to the unpractised eye are as legible as the largest type to the old woodsman, who, besides being a close and keen observer, must be a thinker too, for every day he has to match his reason against the wonderful instinct of the animals whose senses of hearing, smelling, and seeing are many times more acute than those of their two-legged hunter. Woodcraft enables him to live in plenty and even in comfort, under circumstances in which the man unread in forest lore would miserably perish.

The mysteries of trapping, though they are my delight, might not interest my readers, so I shall only make a few general remarks about them. For all fur-bearing animals the wood-trap, or deadfall, is the surest. There are as many varieties of these traps as there are fur-bearing animals. They have to be set with the utmost nicety and precision, so that while the deadfall shall come down surely on the devoted back of the animal for which the trap is set, yet

that a lesser bird or beast shall tug at it with impunity. There is one animal and one only that completely baffles the trapper, and that is carcajou, surnamed the "Indian devil." This evil beast if he strikes upon a sable line goes calmly from one end of it to the other robbing every trap. For some animals traps are baited, for others, as for example otters, they are set unbaited in their roads. The baits used are various, fish, flesh, and fowl. Then again the trapper must be a *connoisseur* of scents—not Rimmel's nor Lubin's—but of those that attract fur. The castor bag and the oil bag of the beaver seem to possess a universal attraction. Valerian has charms for some, rum for others, so have pepper, onions, aniseed, asafœtida, &c. In my trapping days I carried a bottle loaded with a mixture so potent that when the cork was drawn everyone sneezed within a radius of 50 yards. Even the steel trap requires skill in the setting, for instance it is quite useless to catch a beaver by the hand or fore foot, the trap must be set in such a way and in such a position as to catch him by the hind foot. In fact the secrets of trapping are endless and can only be understood by practical experience.

When the fur season ended (about the 1st of June), I was quite sorry to say goodbye to the old smoke-stained camp that had been my home for nearly ten months, and on my return to civilization I felt as shy as a beaver, and often caught myself involuntarily looking on the streets for "tracks." To this day I look back upon my year's trapping with the greatest satisfaction. On that year I solved the problem which has puzzled many a vagabond, viz. to make both ends meet. Besides skins, trophies, &c., that I kept or gave to friends, I sold upwards of 100*l.* worth of fur.

thing in Canada is saturated with politics, even the angling. Men get their salmon rivers according to their politics. It is even doubtful whether a conservative salmon would rise at a grit fly. If political jobbery in angling matters were done away with, and rivers put up to fair competition among the angling public, the revenue might be increased 10,000*l.* per annum, and there would be ample room for every angler in Canada and for visitors to boot. The total sum yielded by the salmon rivers at present falls short of 1000*l.* per annum. The Restigouche, containing 50 miles of fishing water, or, with its tributaries, over 100 miles, is perhaps the finest salmon river in the world. This magnificent river, which is crossed by the Intercolonial Railroad, is leased with its tributaries by four gentlemen, *who pay 4l. each per annum for it.* This river, one of the best, and certainly the most accessible in the Dominion, if divided into sections and let by fair competition, would afford sport to a large number of persons, and would alone bring in as much revenue as all the rivers in Canada do at present. All good things in Canada fall to the lot of the party in power. Each change of ministry gives a chance to new men; but unfortunately in fishing matters this is not the case. The rivers are leased for ten years, and locked up from sportsmen for that period. I do not blame the fortunate owners of the rivers—no doubt many of us would be glad to get them on the same terms if we had the chance; but I do blame the Government for creating a monopoly not only injurious to anglers, but prejudicial to the best interests of the Dominion. It is obvious that every angler who spends a fortnight or a month on a

river must spend a considerable sum of money, and Canadian legislators know very well that circulation of money in a newly-settled country is very useful. Under the present system not one shilling is spent for a pound that would be spent were the angling not monopolized. Lessees in many instances stay a week or two on their rivers, and then leave them for the rest of the season; sometimes they never visit them at all. The casual angler cannot get a day's fishing, even when the river is deserted; that is to say the sportsman cannot, for this dog-in-the-manger system is a harvest to the poacher. It is a case of absentee landlordism. The settlers who live on the river have no interest in preserving the river; just the contrary, the angling public, whose presence would put money in their pockets, being excluded; so, as a rule, they turn poachers, and are frequently aided and abetted by the underpaid guardians of the river. It is said, in extenuation of this policy, that the gentlemen who job the rivers at nominal rents do not make money of them by subletting; but this to the casual angler is a misfortune. It would be better for him if the lessee would sublet, as it certainly would be better for the rivers. Anglers are the natural protectors of the salmon; but as things are managed in Canada at present their interest in protecting the fisheries is reduced to a minimum. Instances have come under my own knowledge where hundreds of salmon have been destroyed by the spear and the sweep-net on a river which the lessee rarely visited, but from which he excluded anglers; had he not been so churlish they would have protected his river for him. It is a monstrous injustice that a man

pitch dark—and he lay on the bottom like a log. My Indians made a birch-bark torch and speared him.

A canoe is essential to the angler in most Canadian waters, and as canoe-men the Indians are unrivalled. The lumberers, too, are good canoe-men, and force their ponderous dug-outs up most formidable rapids, but the Indian does by consummate skill what the white man does by sheer strength; he knows that his bark is as fragile as a lady's bonnet, that, buoyant and graceful as it is, a little touch against a rock will rend its delicate skin. He must therefore thread his way with the utmost caution. Running the rapids in a bark canoe is exciting work; as the canoe bounds along at great speed, a rock seems to spring up from the bottom of the river right ahead of the bow; instant destruction seems unavoidable, for in this headlong torrent the strongest swimmer would have but little chance. But the watchful Indian is perfect master of his craft, and steers clear of every danger. Two or three safe runs in a canoe beget confidence, but the novice carries his heart in his mouth down the rapids.

The Indian method of salmon fishing is with the torch and spear, and the skill they display in this operation is simply marvellous. Gliding rapidly down stream, through shallows, whirlpools, eddies, and rapids, it requires a quick and practised eye to detect a fish, and a quick and skilful hand to strike it. A slight miscalculation as to the depth of the water, and the unlucky spearman follows his spear headlong into the deep. Dark, still nights are suitable for salmon spearing, and the blazing birch-bark torch, which throws a brilliant but fitful glare on the canoe and on the water just around it, makes darkness more dark

outside the circle of its light. The canoe seems to stand perfectly still, and the bottom of the river to run rapidly away from it. Suddenly the man at the bow makes a dart at a fish, and if fortunate enough to strike a heavy salmon lets go his spear, and recovers it afterwards with the fish between its jaws. The spear is made of two jaws or shoulders of tough pliant wood, which open out to admit the fish, which is held firmly by an iron spike in the centre.

An invaluable treasure to the backwoodsman is the bark of the birch tree. It is easily detached from the trunk in the early summer. At this season the Indian prowls about the forest seeking for a canoe birch, i.e. a tree from which a sheet of bark can be procured of sufficient size to make a canoe, and free from flaws. The tree having been found, felled, and chopped off to the proper length, he proceeds to nick the log along one side, and then tenderly and carefully peels off the bark. Sticking pegs in the ground to mark out the exact size of the canoe, he then moulds the sheet of bark into shape, warming it as he goes on at the fire to make it soft and pliable. Next the gunwale of cedar wood is bent to the required shape and stitched to the bark: the latter is his squaw's work, and the threads she uses are the tough and stringy roots of the spruce tree. The lining is made of cedar splits or laths, and five transverse bars of tough wood securely fastened to the gunwale keep the canoe stiff and shapely. For caulking purposes, a pitch made of resin and grease is used, and with this mixture the stem, stern, and other unavoidable seams are hermetically sealed, and the pitch-pot is a part of the furniture of every canoe.

choppers than the Canadian lumbermen; the axe is their plaything in childhood and their companion through life. Log canoes are capital things in shoal, rocky rivers; no amount of bumping can hurt them; but, on the other hand, they are clumsy and difficult to "portage," and for general purposes are inferior to the bark.

To make a complete angler's list of all the rivers and lakes in the Dominion, and to give particulars of the sport obtainable on that vast extent of water, would be a task beyond my power. I may, however, briefly mention a few of the best rivers for the possible guidance of anglers. To commence with the south shore of the St. Lawrence: we find that the streams above Quebec, though presenting a most inviting appearance, have been almost depopulated of fish. The first really good salmon river is the Rimouski, which is let on lease up to the year 1878, for the sum of $20 per annum. Salmon average about 16 lbs. in Rimouski. The Metis comes next, and is, I believe, let for the same period, at a nominal sum. Matane is a nice little river, leased up to the year 1882, at $40 per annum. Besides these there are several other small unleased rivers in the county of Rimouski, which occasionally hold fish. This district is very accessible; there is a railway to Quebec, and in summer frequent steamers. The Upper Canadians come here in numbers in the hot weather for sea-bathing, and there are generally plenty of anglers among them.

Farther down the coast, passing the Cape Chatte, which is a good trout stream, with an odd salmon, we come to the St. Anne's des Montes, a beautiful river, which is leased for $50 per annum up to 1879. Salmon run large

in St. Anne's, averaging nearly 20 lbs. The Magdalen is the next salmon river on the coast, it is leased up to the year 1881, at $20 per annum. This river, like many others, had been fished out, but, under better management, is improving.

Emptying into the beautiful basin of Gaspé there are three perfect little gems of rivers. They have the advantage of being very accessible, two or three steamers a week in summer, calling in at Gaspé. Unlike the big rivers in the Bay of Chaleur, one has not to go far up these streams for sport; indeed I have had excellent sport in the York river from the hotel at Gaspé. With better hotel accommodation Gaspé would be a charming summer retreat for the tourist. There is no heat in summer, the air is very bracing, and the scenery pretty. The St. John is the best salmon river of the three; it is a charming stream to fish, and salmon run large; it is reserved for the use of the Governor-General and his friends. The Dartmouth is another charming stream; 2 or 3 miles from the mouth there is a beautiful pool at the foot of some falls, where I have killed big sea trout and salmon till my arms were tired. Recently these falls have been blasted to let the fish higher up the river. This river is leased up to the year 1882, at the yearly rent of $100, but I believe that the lessees allow casual anglers to fish at a small payment per diem.

The York river is leased up to 1883, for $75 per annum. Fish do not run quite so large as in the St. John, but there are plenty of them, and they take the fly very freely. These three small rivers show what the fishing would be in the many hundred little rivers that flow into the river